

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL EUROPEAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS

AMCONSUL HAMILTON

AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 050487

INFORM CONSULS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CSCE, UR

SUBJECT: GUIDANCE ON RADIO LIBERTY AND RADIO FREE EUROPE

1. FOR THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS, SOVIETS AND TO VARYING DEGREES THEIR EASTERN EUROPEAN ALLIES HAVE ENGAGED IN A BARRAGE OF PROPAGANDA ATTACKS ON RADIO LIBERTY (RL) AN, RADIO FREE EUROPE (RFE). SOVIETS HAVE ALLEGED THAT STATIONS ARE CENTERS OF ;IDEOLOGICAL SUBVERSION AND ESPIONAGE", EMPLOY FORMER NAZIS AND "TRAITORS", AND ARE STAFFED AND CONTROLLED BY CIA. IN MEDIA AND IN PRIVATE TALKS SOVIETS HAVE ASSERTED THAT RL AND RFE BROADCASTS ;POISON" THE INTERNATIONAL ATMOSPHERE, ARE CONTRARY TO
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INTERNATIONAL LAW AND THE UN CHARTER AND VIOLATE THE

SPIRIT OF THE CSCE FINAL ACT.

2. MOTIVATIONS FOR SOVIET ATTACKS ARE VARIED BUT CAMPAIGN IS CLEARLY PART OF GENERAL EFFORT BY SOVIETS AND THEIR ALLIES TO COUNTER ADVERSE CRITICISM IN WEST OF THEIR PERFORMANCE UNDER CSCE PROVISIONS IN HUMAN RIGHTS AREA. IN THEIR ATTEMPT TO POINT TO AREAS OF THEIR COMPLIANCE WITH CSCE AND WESTERN NON-COMPLIANCE THEY HAVE OBVIOUSLY SINGLED OUT RADIO BROADCASTING AS LEADING EXAMPLE OF LATTER. IN ALLEGING THAT WESTERN BROADCASTS DO NOT PROMOTE MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING, THEY ALSO MAY HOPE TO EXERT

PRESSURE ON GOVERNMENTS OF FRG, SPAIN AND PORTUGAL, WHICH HAVE RL/RFE FACILITIES ON THEIR TERRITORY. ADDITIONALLY, CAMPAIGN HAS PROPAGANDA VALUE FOR SOVIETS INSIDE AND OUTSIDE WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES. ATTACKS ON TWO STATIONS SEEM TO BE AIMED AT DESTROYING CREDIBILITY OF RL AND RFE AMONG SOVIET AND EASTERN EUROPEAN LISTENERS AND AT SEND-ING OUT WARNINGS ABOUT THE NEED FOR IDEOLOGICAL VIGILANCE BECAUSE OF WESTERN "SUBVERSIVE" EFFORTS.

3. WE WANT IT TO BE CLEAR TO THE SOVIETS THAT US AND WESTERN PARTICIPANTS IN CSCE REJECT AND DISMISS THESE ATTACKS AND ARE NOT MOVED BY THEM TO MODIFY THEIR SUPPORT OF FREER FLOW OF INFORMATION, INCLUDING RFE/RL TRANSMIS-SIONS. POSTS SHOULD DRAW ON FOLLOWING GUIDANCE IN CON-VERSATIONS WITH HOST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.

4. WE SEE NO NEED TO BE APOLOGETIC OR DEFENSIVE ABOUT USG SUPPORT OF RL/RFE. WHILE BOTH STATIONS HAVE A LARGE DEGREE OF AUTONOMY IN BROADCASTING POLICIES, THEY ARE OVERSEEN BY BOARD FOR INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING, AN IN-DEPENDENT AGENCY OF THE USG, AND RECEIVE THE LARGE BULK OF THEIR FUNDING FROM OFFICIAL USG CONTRIBUTION. USG AND CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT FOR RADIOS REMAINS STRONG AND UN-WAVERING AND VEHEMENCE OF SOVIET ATTACKS INDICATES EFFEC-TIVENESS OF RL/RFE EFFORTS IN COVERING INTERNATIONAL EVENTS AND INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS IN COUNTRIES TO WHICH THEY BROADCAST.

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5. WE CONSIDER THAT RL/RFE BROADCASTS ARE FULLY CONSIST-ENT WITH SPIRIT AND LETTER OF CSCE FINAL ACT. THEIR CENTRAL PURPOSE IS TO ENCOURAGE A FREER FLOW OF INFORMA-TION BETWEEN EAST AND WEST WHICH IS ESSENTIAL TO PROGRESS TOWARD IMPROVED AND MORE STABLE RELATIONS. SOVIETS THEMSELVES HAVE CONSISTENTLY STATED THAT THE "IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE" MUST CONTINUE DESPITE DETENTE BUT THEY APPAR-ENTLY WISH TO PUSH THEIR END OF IT WITHOUT ADMITTING

POSSIBILITY OF DIFFERING VIEWS. IN ADDITION TO COVERING WORLD AFFAIRS BASED ON WESTERN NEWS SOURCES AND SOVIET AND EASTERN EUROPEAN BROADCASTS AND TELETYPE SERVICES. RL AND RFE ALSO HAVE REGULAR BROADCASTS BASED ON POLITICAL, CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS DOCUMENTS WRITTEN INSIDE USSR AND EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, WHICH ARE PREVENTED FROM PUBLICATION BY OFFICIAL CENSORSHIP. THROUGH THEIR OWN BROADCASTING ACTIVITIES, SUCH AS RADIO MOSCOW, SOVIETS PRESENT THEIR VIEWS ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND ON DOMESTIC EVENTS IN THE WEST AND DO NOT EXPECT US TO AGREE WITH THEIR VIEWPOINTS. WE CONSIDER THIS LEGITIMATE AND DO NOT ACCEPT ARGUMENT THAT RL/RFE AND OTHER WESTERN RADIO STATIONS SHOULD BE REGARDED IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT.

6. AS FOR SOVIET ALLEGATIONS THAT RL/RFE SPECIFICALLY VIOLATE CSCE PROVISIONS ON RADIO BROADCASTING, WE CONSIDER THIS A DISTORTION OF CSCE LANGUAGE WHICH STATES: ,THE PARTICIPATING STATES NOTE THE EXPANSION IN THE DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION BROADCAST BY RADIO, AND EXPRESS THE HOPE FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THIS PROCESS, SO AS TO MEET THE INTEREST OF MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AMONG PEOPLES AND THE AIMS SET FORTH BY THIS CONFERENCE." THIS LANGUAGE, WHICH IS END RESULT OF DIFFICULT NEGOTIATION, PRINCIPALLY BETWEEN U.S. AND SOVIETS, REFERS TO THE SOVIET CESSATION OF JAMMING THE VOICE OF AMERICA, BBC AND DEUTSCHE WELLE IN THE FALL OF 1973. OUR POSITION IS THAT THE SOVIETS DO NOT HAVE ANY VALID CLAIM TO COMPLAIN ABOUT CONTENT OF RL/RFE BROADCASTS BASED ON THIS LANGUAGE. ON THE CONTRARY, THE PHRASE EXPRESSES THE HOPE FOR A CONTINUED REDUCTION IN JAMMING OF FOREIGN BROADCASTS. FINAL ACT ALSO CONTAINS A COMMITMENT UNDER WHICH THE PARTICIPATING STATES "MAKE IT THEIR AIM TO FACILITATE THE FREER AND WIDER DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION OF ALL KINDS". WE BELIEVE THESE PROVISIONS, TO WHICH SO-
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VIETS HAVE SUBSCRIBED, PUT ONUS ON USSR AND EASTERN EUROPEAN STATES TO REDUCE AND GRADUALLY TERMINATE JAMMING OF FOREIGN BROADCASTS, INCLUDING JAMMING OF RL AND RFE.

7. FURTHER BACKGROUND ON CSCE AND RADIO BROADCASTING FOLLOWS BY SEPTEL. INGERSOLL

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